

answer our Nation's call and remain ready to respond to threats anywhere in the world at a moment's notice.

As I said, we owe our men and women in uniform a debt we cannot hope to repay, but we can resolve to live our lives in such a way as to be worthy of their sacrifices. Today and every day, may we remember the gratitude that we owe our military men and women and imitate their love of freedom and their devotion to our country.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

2020 ELECTIONS

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, a Republican candidate in California by the name of Errol Webber lost his race for Congress by 72 points, and yet he is not conceding that he has lost. He says:

I'm going to the Los Angeles County Registrar's Office to audit the vote counting procedures. I will NOT concede. Every LEGAL vote needs to be counted!

Just up the road in Maryland, a Republican candidate by the name of Kim Klacik lost by 40 points, and she is refusing to concede. She retweeted a post from President Trump in which she claimed that the election was stolen, and she wrote:

I beat my opponent on day of & in-person early voting, along with absentee. However, 97k mail in ballots were found in his favor?

My colleagues, there is an epidemic of delusion that is spreading out from the White House and infecting the entire Republican Party in the wake of this election, and it presents a real threat to this country.

President Trump didn't win the election. Every single one of my colleagues knows this. And he didn't just lose. He lost by a pretty substantial margin. He lost by 4.3 percent of the popular vote, likely around 70 electoral votes when all the counting is done.

And while the results haven't been certified yet, this isn't the election in 2000. There aren't any hanging chads. We are not arguing about 500 votes here or there. In Michigan, the margin today is 148,000. In Nevada, the margin is 36,000. In Pennsylvania, it is 47,000. In Wisconsin, it is 20,000. In Georgia, it is 12,000. In Arizona, it is 14,000. Thousands and thousands of votes are these margins.

Hillary Clinton, in 2016, lost by less than the President did in Pennsylvania and Michigan and by about the same amount in Wisconsin, and she conceded the day after the election. Now, this is important, and I think we need to talk about it here because it has real consequences for democracy and for national security.

Why hasn't the President conceded? Now, it is not because there was voter fraud or because the election was stolen from him. We are a week out, and the President is still desperately searching for evidence of fraud. He won't find it because it doesn't exist. It doesn't exist in Pennsylvania or Michigan or Wisconsin or Georgia.

The President has empowered the Department of Justice to now go out and launch investigations of voter fraud despite a longstanding precedent for the DOJ to stay out of elections if their actions could be determinative. But the President is so desperate now to fill in his mythology, his narrative, with facts that he doesn't have, that he is sending the DOJ on this massive national fishing expedition.

He hasn't conceded—not because there is fraud. There hasn't been. He is not conceding because he believes that there is a chance he could remain as President without having won the election, so long as congressional Republicans are willing to stick with him step by step by step, and, so far, there is no evidence that congressional Republicans are ever going to step away from President Trump's delusional assault on democracy.

Senator MCCONNELL said this week that the President is "within his rights" to fight the election. That is of course true. The President can keep filing frivolous legal challenges if he wants. We are not going to stop him from doing that. But just because he has the right to mount these legal challenges, that doesn't mean that Republicans here have to support him in those efforts if they contravene the interests of democracy and the interests of a smooth transition of power.

Today, Republicans support the President's refusal to concede. They support his lawsuits. They call on election officials—most recently, in Georgia—who refuse to bend their knee to Trump to resign, and they endorsed the President's decision to refuse to begin the transition.

This may sort of seem like a side-show now to the inevitability of a transfer of power, but what is next? What if President Trump asks Republicans here to contest the selection of electors? What if he gets the message from Republicans in Congress that if you are willing to support all the steps he has taken since Tuesday, that you will continue to support his efforts to try to remain in office despite losing both the popular vote and the electoral college? That is within his rights, to ask you to support a contest of electors. But will you do it? What so far have we seen to suggest that there is an end to your decision to put your allegiance to this President above an allegiance to the country?

The Secretary of State was asked today if he thought there would be a smooth transition of power from President Trump to the winner of the election, Vice President and President-Elect Biden. And Secretary Pompeo

said: "There will be a smooth transition to a second Trump administration."

Listen, these guys aren't playing. This isn't just for show. They are going to keep pushing the bounds of democracy until somebody stops them. It is logical to ask: If Republicans have been willing to support every conspiracy that the President has engaged in over the last week, then why wouldn't they support the next set of attacks on democracy that this President engages in?

How far are Republicans willing to go in their attacks against the decision of voters?

Now, for the President, there is really no downside to what he is doing right now. Either he steals the election or he grows his political power, because we have learned in the last 24 hours that the President is raising money today online from his supporters, not for a fund that is designed to strictly finance a recount effort but for a new political action committee that he has established that will fund his political efforts over the next 4 years. The button you click may give you the idea that you are supporting the President's recount but, in fact, you are helping him to amass resources that will allow him to be a major political presence for the next 4 years. So either the President is successful in continuing this assault on the transition of power or he is able to amass resources that help him into the future.

There is no downside for the President. There is a big downside for the rest of us. There is a big downside for this country.

In the short run, the country's national security is threatened by a messy transition. This has been covered, I think, well today, but, traditionally, the President-elect would be able to start getting briefings on national security threats, would start to get access to classified information, and would begin to be able to do background checks on individuals that he would like to be part of his national security cabinet. Traditionally, those are among the first confirmations that move through this body, the President's national security team. All of that is being delayed by a President who refuses to begin a transition and a Republican Senate that refuses to put pressure on the President to change his mind.

But, also, and in some ways more insidious, is the attack on the rule of law and the idea of peaceful transition of power itself. The narrative that President Trump is spreading and that congressional Republicans are facilitating right now that the election was stolen or rigged, it isn't being written on a white board that is going to be neatly and tidily erased as soon as 2021 shows up. No, the work that is being done right now by the Republican Party to undermine faith in our elections will have a very long, very long tale. And when the American people or a large

percentage of them lose faith in elections, when they are told by leaders they trust that elections that were actually held legitimately are illegitimate, then, those individuals, of course, will naturally lose faith in public institutions themselves. If all the people who got elected were illegitimately chosen, then, so must be the actions they take once they are in office.

Now, maybe that is consistent with the general Republican project over the last several decades. I have watched as Republicans have engaged in a withering assault on the public sector. The whole idea from Republicans has been that government is illegitimate by its very nature and can't do anything to help you or to solve your problems. But that idea, if it is, in fact, the goal of my Republican colleagues to delegitimize public institutions by delegitimizing elections, is really dangerous for two reasons. One, don't assume that democracy can survive this. If the 45 percent of the country that supports Donald Trump doesn't really believe that elections are legitimate, I am not sure that democracy hangs around for another 100 years. But, second, we are living in a moment where it is really important for people to have faith in public institutions. There is no way for us to turn the corner on this pandemic unless people believe what leaders are telling them about how to conduct themselves or about how we are going to administer a vaccine or about why the business around the corner from you is limiting the number of people who can enter it. In the middle of a pandemic that has killed going on 250,000 Americans, losing faith in public institutions is deadly.

The President is delusional. There was no voter fraud. He lost. The American people, by a large margin, chose Joe Biden as President of the United States, and this delusion is not a quaint sideshow. It is an assault on our democracy that will have consequences for the future viability of democracy but also for the viability of public institutions to meet crises like the one that we stand in the middle of today.

The President's behavior and the behavior of Republicans in Congress who support him is dangerously unpatriotic. When we arrive in the Senate we swear an oath to our country, not to our party, and right now our President and congressional Republicans are not living up to that oath.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VETERANS DAY

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, today in Oklahoma, people are going to work, people are going to school, people are on their job, people are in their yard, people are on bikes, people are going for a quiet run in beautiful weather because tomorrow is Veterans Day. We enjoy freedom and peace today because of what those veterans have done for a very long time.

Whatever community you are in in Oklahoma, whether you are in Oklahoma City or in Tulsa, or in Lawton, whether you are in Guymon, or Idabel, Altus, or Waukomis—it doesn't matter—you are going to find drawings; you are going to find displays; you are going to find military hardware; you are going to find memorials and monuments to veterans who have served because across our State we remember extremely well the sacrifice that has been made for the quietness of this day, the ability to have an election, the ability to send our kids to school, the ability to work hard, to fight off a virus, the ability to invent and innovate because 1 percent of our Nation has set aside their life to be able to guard the rest of the 99 percent of us. We in Oklahoma could not be more grateful for the service of those women and men over the years and currently.

As a nation, we pause on Veterans Day and remember, but I think about veterans who don't just pause once a year to do it. It is part of who they are. They served our Nation in the military, and they find ways to continue to serve veterans and to serve the people around them in their community every single day.

There are people who work at the veterans centers in Oklahoma who are remarkable people who help veterans literally every week to be able to work through and navigate the bureaucracy. Our office works with them to try to get solutions and answers if they have issues with the VA or they have issues with trying to get their medals or whatever it may be. But these volunteers are scattered all across our State.

We have staff members today who are working in veterans facilities scattered all over the State who are taking care of veterans who are basically in an assisted living-type environment or in a nursing long-term care environment. Those individuals get up every single day and love on veterans. They look them in the eye, when they are now at their weakest moment of their life since their infancy, and say: Our Nation still cares about you.

There are people today in Oklahoma who work on Federal housing programs designed to help veterans who are homeless on the street to get care, to find a place to live, and to get established. There are people in Oklahoma today who are working with Federal programs to help veterans who have struggled with addiction, some who didn't reacclimate well. They are helping them right now because our Nation has not forgotten about them.

While we grieve with those who grieve—because Veterans Day also brings back the memory, for some families who are Gold Star families, of the ones they have lost—we remind them again that we have not forgotten, and we say thank you to those folks who are serving our veterans every single day.

I also think about folks like Bob Ford, who lives in Okeene, OK. He is working at Shawnee Milling Company and does a remarkable job just providing for the people in the community, but he has also kept alive the memory of fellow Vietnam veterans. In so many ways, he helps not only the park and other places to remember, but he also makes sure on Veterans Day that there are speakers in local schools and that someone is retelling the message. He is the one in the community who is always making sure there is a patriotic display at some point. You see, he is a Vietnam veteran himself who is serving and working in the community but who has also turned around said, though his uniform is not on anymore, he wants to make sure the next generation knows what honorable service really looks like.

There are folks like Terry Hill from Kellyville, OK, who enlisted in the Army in 2013 as an engineer and was commissioned as an officer in 2008. He became a Black Hawk aeromedical research and maintenance test pilot. He flew 750 combat missions in Afghanistan over multiple deployments before he came down really, really hard one time and had a medical discharge.

You see, for Terry, Veterans Day is not a once-a-year thing. He founded Rapid Application Group in his home. It is an additive manufacturing company. In fact, his is the only additive manufacturing company that has a disabled veteran running it in the entire country. Every Friday, he has a hashtag "RAG Friday." Many of those who work in his company are also fellow veterans. But every Friday, he reminds everyone to watch out for fellow veterans, to watch out for issues like possible suicide senses, to engage with those folks who have made great sacrifices to serve our Nation, and to continue to check on them because some of the things they have experienced and some of the challenges they have faced leave lasting memories for them. As they stood for our freedom and our country forgets those moments, they never do because they have lived them firsthand. So his simple way to do RAG Fridays every Friday and to challenge folks to not forget veterans in your community is his way of being able to serve folks.

Again, as a nation, we have not forgotten, but we are exceptionally grateful for those who remind us as a nation not just to remember once a year but to stay engaged with those veterans who have given so much and continue to give so much.

Honestly, I don't know a veteran who is not still serving. They find ways to